PO3A1-15 Dynamics of Nuclear Proliferation

26/27

Department
Politics & International Studies
Level
Undergraduate Level 3
Module leader
Dominic Kelly
Credit value
15
Module duration
10 weeks
Assessment
100% coursework
Study location
University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

With questions of nuclear war-fighting, proliferation, and diplomacy once again at the forefront of world politics, this module considers the dynamics of contemporary nuclear proliferation. At its core, the module poses a deceptively simple question: why do states build (or threaten to build) nuclear weapons?

To answer this question, the module opens with a consideration of the history of nuclear weapons, of nuclear fear, and of theories of proliferation. This historical, cultural and theoretical overview supports a basic understanding of the dynamics of nuclear proliferation as portrayed in the established literature.

The module then turns to the contemporary scene: interrogating the key claims made in the academic literature through detailed examination of contemporary case studies. These case studies examine the policies of the ‘Tier 1’ nuclear states (the US & Russia), with an emphasis on vertical proliferation; and also the strategic, financial and diplomatic dilemmas faced by the ‘Tier 2’ nuclear states (China, France, the UK). The module then adopts a regional focus: examining the circumstances shaping the evolution of nuclear proliferation in North East Asia, the Middle East, South Asia and, finally, Africa and South America.

Module aims

This module analyses the dynamics of nuclear proliferation and their governance. It investigates common and competing theories of nuclear proliferation, and applies these to several historical and contemporary case studies. After assessing contemporary developments within the context of multilateral constraints, the module examines the regional politics of nuclear proliferation, paying particular attention to contemporary controversies including: horizontal proliferation (e.g. North Korea, Iran, fears of nuclear terrorism), and vertical proliferation (e.g. Chinese, US and Russian force modernisation).

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

Contemporary nuclear fears
Why some states want nuclear weapons
Controlling proliferation
US national security and the bomb
Responding to the bomb: the USSR and Europe
NE Asia
South Asia
The Middle East
Review

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate and communicate advanced understanding of the main theoretical arguments and substantive issues informing complex scholarly and policy debates on nuclear proliferation
- Demonstrate and communicate advanced understanding of historical and current developments informing complex scholarly and policy debates on nuclear proliferation
- Demonstrate and communicate current and advanced knowledge of the key actors in the global and regional politics of nuclear weapons, and the institutions and processes through which they interact
- Manage their own learning in the production and communication of oral and written work to an advanced academic standard

Indicative reading list

Reading lists can be found in Talis

International

Global Affairs

Subject specific skills

Communication skills
Lateral thinking skills
Skills in the distillation and application of complex information and ideas
Critical thinking
Analytical skills
Independent research skills

Transferable skills

This module provides students with opportunities to acquire or develop the following key skills:
Communication skills
Lateral thinking skills
Skills in the distillation and application of complex information and ideas
Critical thinking
Analytical skills

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	9 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Seminars	9 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Private study	92 hours (61%)
Assessment	40 hours (27%)
Total	150 hours

Private study description

Reading primary and secondary materials appropriate to the module. Searching for and organising appropriate material. Note taking and planning.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A2

Assessment component	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
3000 word essay	100%	40 hours	Yes (extension)

Reassessment component is the same

Feedback on assessment

Completion of a standardised feedback template. Further oral feedback from the first marker at student request.

Availability

Courses

This module is Core optional for:

- Year 4 of UHIA-VM16 Undergraduate History and Politics (with Intercalated Year and a term in Venice)
- Year 3 of UHIA-VM13 Undergraduate History and Politics (with a term in Venice)

This module is Optional for:

- Year 3 of UECA-LM1D Undergraduate Economics, Politics and International Studies
- Year 3 of UPOA-M102 Undergraduate Global Politics (with Integrated Year Abroad at Brussels School of Governance, VUB)
- Year 3 of UPHA-V7ML Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics
- Year 4 of UPHA-V7MM Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics (with Intercalated year)
- Year 3 of UPOA-M100 Undergraduate Politics
- Year 4 of UPOA-M101 Undergraduate Politics (with Intercalated Year)
- Year 4 of UPOA-M168 Undergraduate Politics and International Studies with Chinese
- Year 3 of UPOA-M169 Undergraduate Politics and International Studies with Chinese (3 year)
- Year 3 of UPOA-M164 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and German
- Year 4 of UPOA-M165 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Italian
- Year 4 of UPOA-M167 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Quantitative Methods (with Intercalated Year)

- Year 3 of UPHA-V7MW Undergraduate Politics, Philosophy and Law
- Year 4 of UPHA-V7MX Undergraduate Politics, Philosophy and Law (with Intercalated Year)

This module is Unusual option for:

- UPHA-V7ML Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics
    - Year 3 of V7MR Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Bipartite with Economics Major)
    - Year 3 of V7MP Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Bipartite)
- UPHA-V7MM Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics (with Intercalated year)
    - Year 4 of V7MS Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Bipartite with Economics Major) (with Intercalated Year)
    - Year 4 of V7MQ Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Bipartite) with Intercalated Year
    - Year 4 of V7MM Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Tripartite) (with Intercalated year)
- Year 3 of UPHA-V7MW Undergraduate Politics, Philosophy and Law
- Year 4 of UPHA-V7MX Undergraduate Politics, Philosophy and Law (with Intercalated Year)

This module is Option list A for:

- Year 3 of UPOA-M16A Undergraduate Politics and International Studies
- Year 4 of UPOA-M16B Undergraduate Politics and International Studies (with Intercalated Year)
- Year 3 of UPOA-ML13 Undergraduate Politics and Sociology
- Year 4 of UPOA-ML14 Undergraduate Politics and Sociology (with Intercalated year)
- Year 4 of UPOA-M163 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and French
- Year 4 of UPOA-M164 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and German
- Year 3 of UPOA-M16D Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and German (3 year degree)
- Year 4 of UPOA-M166 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Hispanic Studies
- Year 3 of UPOA-M16H Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Hispanic Studies (3 year degree)

This module is Option list B for:

- Year 4 of UHIA-VM15 Undergraduate History and Politics (with Intercalated Year)
- Year 3 of UPHA-V5L2 Undergraduate Philosophy and Politics

This module is Option list C for:

- UPHA-V7ML Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics
    - Year 3 of V7MP Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Bipartite)
    - Year 3 of V7ML Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Tripartite)
- UPHA-V7MM Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics (with Intercalated year)
    - Year 4 of V7MS Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Bipartite with Economics Major) (with Intercalated Year)
    - Year 4 of V7MQ Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Bipartite) with Intercalated Year
    - Year 4 of V7MM Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Tripartite) (with Intercalated year)

This module is Option list D for:

- Year 3 of UHIA-VM11 Undergraduate History and Politics
- Year 4 of UHIA-VM12 Undergraduate History and Politics (with Year Abroad)
- Year 3 of UPHA-V7ML Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics